



Poems

—AND—

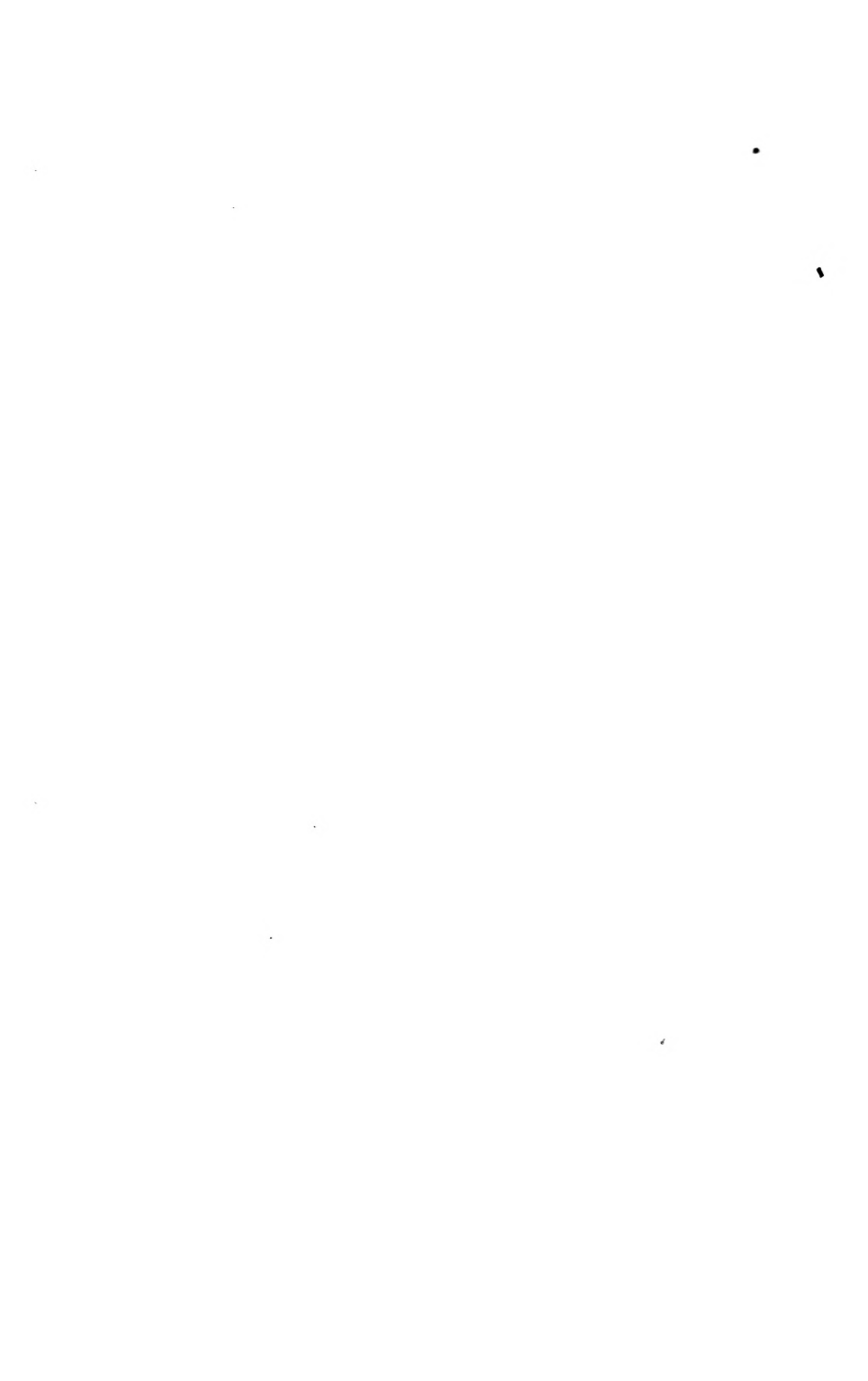
Miscellany,

BY

Geo. M. Taylor.

PASO ROBLES, CAL.
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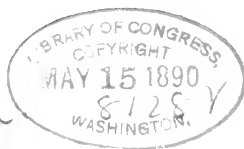
POEMS

—AND—

MISCELLANY

—BY—

Alfred
Geo. A. Taylor



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Preface.

IN presenting this volume of verse to the American reviewers, the author does so conscious of its many imperfections, but in the hope that it may possess sufficient merit to offset them. "The Lost and the Doomed" properly belongs to a collection of juvenile poems. "Recklaw" was written when its author ought probably to have had more discretion. If there is in the following lines that which will inspire in the reviewer's breast a hope for something of genuine merit from this pen, this effort will not have been in vain.

THE AUTHOR.

Paso Robles, Cal.



THE LOST AND THE DOOMED.

An Allegorical Poem.

PRELUDE.

Far, where Night's dreary empire, lies the
peopled gulf beside,
Sad Sorrow, on her gloomy wing, and giant
Woe, abide,
For Night no more is. Night beloved on
every heavenly shore,
Now o'er the West, her melancholy reign,
shall brood no more.
Say further sable muse; still in thy humble
numbers tell,
Where fared the wandering God and how
the gloomy Goddess fell:
How mourned for virtue, vanquished, all
the spirits of the air,
And fled the doomed destroyer, ne'er to
tarry anywhere.

PART I.

I.

Still sleeps Night's empire by the void
and silent sleep,
Her battlements and solemn tower. Far
o'er the airy deep.
As lookouts on the sea descry the beacon
through the storm,
Her sentries mark the swift approach of a
celestial form.
Oft in their weary vigils him the watchers
once descried,
Wingless and all buoyant, his career in
safety guide,
And oft, the Night, least sleepful, while her
hosts were slumbrous most,
Had met him in a guilty tryst, far down her
dreary coast.

He, being a winged messenger, by great
Anrora sent,
Saw many realms and various scenes, on
many a mission bent.
Long since he met in the abyss and loved
the sable Night,
Here steered his wandering course, here
often rested in his flight,
And here, to her dark ears he brought the
gifts she dearest loved.
But lying tales and worthless ore at last his
offerings proved.
Now had he been long absent, and on
other amours roved,
And Night, a lengthy round had from her
tower troubled tried,
Him to descry; but him nowhere her dusky
eye descried,
Till to her guards he wild appeared.

Now, yellow haired, he came,
But lost to her; and thence she saw him
passing scornful flame,
Soon eastward to the deep. Back to return
no more again,
She viewed him glide to a twilight on the
remote champaign,
And fade into the all-absorbing darkness
and the plain.

II.

Sad Night, with her attendant shades, a
journey takes. Lorn maid,
Left by the wandering Sun, and by the
scorning fiend betrayed,
In grief, far seeking strays, him o'er the
distant skies to find,
And she, o'er distant skies to roam, her
empire leaves behind.

Forth, from the gates they issue, in a long
 and grand review,
 Across the plains diminish, and at last
 melt on the view.
 On o'er the intervening plains, and o'er the
 distant deeps,
 The sorrower, majestic, on her fateful
 journey sweeps.
 As when, from laurel covert, on some high
 Sierran mead,
 The doe springs, halts, then vanishes with
 still increasing speed.
 Down forest's ways, the traveler, though
 her form nowhere he find,
 Hath knowledge of her going in the scent
 she leaves behind:
 So from her footsteps sprang a radiance,
 and a day serene,
 She left, a wake, to mark for gazing worlds
 where she had been.

III.

Vast were the fields she traversed, vast the
 fields she left behind,
 When on the East's wide frontier plains,
 her travels 'gan to wind,
 And there, though safe in distance, she the
 vagrant happ'd to find.
 As from the wrath of Justice, the dark out-
 law takes his flight,
 So he, pursued, retreated, still pursuing
 went the Night,
 But far though him she followed, farther
 yet he fled away,
 And back, at last, his flight he bent, to-
 ward regions of the day.
 Then soon beyond the plains of distance,
 on his way he sped,
 And Darkness closed her deep black gates
 behind him as he fled.

IV.

Night, lonely Night, abandoned, is left with
 her shades alone.
 She sighs, a myriad sobs reply, and with
 her plaintive moan,
 A myriad moans awaken in her train.
 She weeps; they grieve—
 Her sorrow is each dark slave's woe.
 And now the weepers leave.

PART II.

I.

Where to the glittering plain the silken
 gloom falls down in folds,
 And seems black curtain hung behind a
 dawn, East now beholds
 The' invading mourners come. Emerging
 gloom from deeper gloom,
 The wand'ers view a wondrous scene
 around the heavenly room.
 Here is a golden river, there an emerald
 mead of green;
 A glancing silver lake, with ruby islands
 lies between.
 Above, a variegated canopy of thousand
 hues is seen.
 Before them, veiled in orient mists, Auro-
 ra's cities swim;
 Seen now as desert mirage, vague, dreamy,
 still and dim.
 Irradiant gates, in arches iridescent
 formed of dews
 Perfumed, gird the celestial kingdom round.
 Love there subdues
 The fierce, nor warders ward, nor warrior's
 gleaming lance.
 Down the long vista rises, e'er the dazzling
 rays to glance.
 Sweet breaths the lazy airs consume, the
 calm, sweet sounds invade,
 With vapors here, and there with clouds,
 fair garden spots are made.
 Refulgent rise the cities in their opulence
 to view,
 And through Aurora's valleys, where no
 follower may pursue,
 Basks in his guilt the messenger. From
 travels, tired, returned,
 He lazily round other suns proud and
 superior burned.

II.

A thousand ships part from the gates to
 join the sable guest,
 Whilst welcom'g hosannas greet the Em-
 press of the West.
 Upon the thousand ships Night embarks
 with all her train,

And in panoply celestial, sails to Aurora's reign.
 Slow on the golden river and across the isled lake,
 The ships in far procession, their majestic journey take.
 Upon every mast are mounted a myriad seraphim,
 And before the gay flotilla schools of jewelled serpents swim.
 Soft incense wafts out to them, as the sea is ferried o'er,
 And a living pulse of music throbs to seaward from the shore.
 But not now above the scene, with her crest of many a star,
 On the forward ship, that even grand Aurora scans afar—
 But not now Night wearied stands. She has sought a gorgeous bed,
 On the deck, the grandest ever for a queen and goddess spread.
 And down through the glorious islands of the silver-sheening sea,
 She is sleeping in a slumber which no more shall broken be.
 Still she sleeps, before the multitudes, reaching like a radiant wall,
 And the robes they bring to deck her, these shall be instead her pall;
 For the voiceful hosts that meet her, when her ship is at the shore
 And the melodies that hail her—she shall see and hear, no more,
 Dead is the great magician, and beside her lies the Morn,
 Which, a rosy infant day, on Aurora's sea was born.

PART III.

I.

High on a radiant throne presiding sate the God of Light.
 Obeisant suns were near, and near the lifeless form of Night,
 More beautiful in death, with solemn reverence displayed

(Her 'lorn and mourning shades around), in heavenly state was laid.
 Beyond lay towns eternal, more succeeding each to sight,
 And in mellow distance sinking, till they vanished in their flight.
 Out from every glorious city airy hosts of songsters spring,
 And from every plain of distance, mournful voices music bring.
 Sadness in the bright air lingered, till o'er the distant plain,
 Old withered Time, upon his way, had passed before his train.
 Then ceased the heavenly choir, every voice was hushed, as one,
 And to his awful throne Aurora called the erring Sun.
 Then was brief sentence to the wretch in virtuous wrath begun:
 "Lies an Alein plain, gloom and alone, beyond the West,
 Where space is all a desert; there find thee a goalless quest.
 From thee shall tribes increase, and travelers curst, they e'er shall be,
 And (comets) in them hells shall live, born of, not lost to, thee.
 Now on thy travels, get thee, outcast, gone! and when (she dead)
 Dame Retribution slumbers, then too, rest thy weary head."

II.

Spurned by his bright companions, by his dullest menials spurned,
 Fast to the void, his footsteps the doomed outcast sadly turned.
 Whipt on, he fled; Remorse's hounds pursued. Far from the scene
 He passed, and where he haughty was, no more his form has been

III.

Say whither still, now doomed to roam the endless plains of air,
 Thy journey tends? Through hells or what, all homeless wanderer?
 Or hast thou dropt down voids eternal as the thunder leaps

Through awful canyons loud and o'er the
 mountain's echoing steep,
 Unheeding whence, careless whither? The
 trails untrod of space,
 Her frontiers are, unpeopled and unknown,
 for thee to trace.
 Wind on, thrice-haunted outcast, grander
 even in thy despair—
 Sun fallen, yet unmissed—stray on, thou
 hapless murderer.

IV.

Now deep-toned thunders, tolling, from the
 distance mournful come,
 And o'er the void, profound a funeral train
 sad takes its roam.
 Farewells follow the travelers, radiant my-
 riads sob adieu,
 And wand'ers of the deep, with sorrowing
 gaze, the sight pursue.

PART IV.

I.

Harpers stray o'er the aerial globe, the sky,
 and string sweet lyres,
 That have chords of grand harmony, whose
 reaching strain expires,
 By famished distance drunk. High kindles
 Dusk her signal fires.
 Dark mists do walk among the stars that
 look dim ghosts in shrouds;
 Grand, lordly wanderers, the planets march
 in tribes and crowds,
 As souls that journey to a goal beyond
 Night's dungeon voids.
 And, lo! the moon across the sky, stalks,
 sheeted in gray clouds.
 There winds the dusty way, and there, be-
 yond yon planetoids,
 The polar sun, swims with her starry brood
 upon the sea,
 Whose wave is joined here to the north,
 there to eternity.

II.

I sleep, and far upon the road of dreams,
 and far away
 From scenes like these, I chartless o'er the
 country stray,

Dead travelers have crossed, nor e'er re-
 turned, nor tidings e'er
 Sent back to guide upon his way the fol-
 lowing wanderer.

I am alone, as once was solitary matter
 'lorn

Down chaos dropped, e'er from its pilgrim
 bulk one world was born,

Mid calm, as when the infant storms are
 lulled to transient sleep

By hands of hurricanes, that o'er wild harps
 of forests sweep.

But on the solitude, what strains of melody
 are poured,

Intoxicating even the solemn gloom? By
 woe abhorrd,

Yet nursed in happy joy's sweet choirs,
 charmed silence drinks the tone,

And dies, as would the darkness rays from
 lamps celestial shone.

Born of voices seraphic, soon their throated
 souls appear,

A radiant train of dames translucent, lead-
 ing, far arrear,

A caravan of formless shades, from sablest
 blackness hewn,

That bear above their shapeless heads a
 casket, radiance strewn.

They come—are gone: Far, far they sweep
 upon their grand career,

And perish from my vision down the West.
 Yet, faint, I hear,

A melody, and a dim radiance see: Then
 silent gloom

And void, a hateful nothing, does usurp
 the happy room.

III.

There is no future; the years are not until
 the present born—

They die, and ride the tide of Time, a with-
 ered dead, out-borne,

Into the past. There is no future; it is but
 the waste

Tired worlds must travel, nor on the desert
 hath the pilgrims rest.

Yet doth the dreamer down the future
 stalk, a ghostly guest,

At Noctus feast to revel, in a land with
 death o'er cast,

Atar to roam, and live within a second's
beating life.

The agonies of years, of days the troublous
strife.

The million years the earth has tramped
on, and, buried, left

Beneath its orbit, might, in a dream, of time
bereft.

Be hurried through ten nights. Thus
though they fled as speeds

The lightning, springing from its lair, to
burn the gloom it feeds

At last its corse, I faster yet pursued and
paused once more,

When plains that wandering stars were
tired to cross were traversed o'er.

This dark, and then a bolt, as sent to doom
an erring world,

Shot from Creation's catapult, passed down
and forceful hurled,

Sank through the darkened sea. Its trail a
yawning wound displayed

Deep in the darkness breast, that closed
not, as grave, new made,

With gaping lips, its coming victim waits.

IV.

Now breaks a light.

Far o'er the sable plain, dispelling gloom,
and, in their flight,

The shapes appear, and, singing, pour their
grand supernal song,

O'er listening halls and voids and wastes,
a mighty tide along.

So sad, so sweet, so beautiful the strains
are brought to me,

I lack a million ears to hear their varying
melody.

V.

The gloom retreats, and yet a depthless
well of gloom remains,

A solitary darklingspot, on all the radiant
plains.

Here pause, assemblage heavenly, around
the dames and shades,

As would, by welcome well, on desert bleak
fair pilgrim maids,

Fair wanderers and slaves, with their
swart masters pause at eve—

And as adown their weary freight, the
lab'ring camels leave,

The shades their burden lower.

VI.

Fair as the cast of death that sleeps
Upon the beauty's brow, Night coffined
seems, while sadly weeps

Her train of grieving shades. With
lengthened swell and cadence sweeps

The myriad voiced anthem o'er the bright
convex profound—

It rising wild, now sinking sweet, peoples
the void around.

Still hear the raven shades, whilst still the
radiant minstrels sing;

Whilst yet along the startled deep, sad
threnodies they fling.

Those sadly sing her burial hymn—these
raise the glorious night,

And sobbing, cast her down the gulf—her
form has passed my sight.

So sinks, by loving hands consigned, into
the expectant wave,

The mariner (His voyage o'er, he finds a
stormless grave

In Ocean's deep). And (to the mourner
with a mournful sound)

So close the waves, as drew the gloom, the
buried Night around.

VII.

As when farewells of loved ones, who depart
which way they will,

Have ceased to be, their echoes roll along
the memory still,

And then return a vacancy, the joyless
plain to fill:

So passed the song and shapes away—the
void became my own,

As gathers blackest night around wrecked
wanderers far on

Ocean's highway, when beyond the sea the
silver moon does stray—

And as the cheerless storm falls on the
schoolboy's holiday.

RECKLAW.

A Tragedy.

CHARACTERS.

SENOR RECKLAW (Owner of a California grant).	CHIC (A saddle-tree maker).
SLADE (An adventurer bent on avenging the betrayal of his sister).	A PRIEST. VAQUEROS, ETC.
PEDRO (Major Domo of the Grant).	ALICE (Daughter of Senor Recklaw).
	MARIE (Her Maid).
	A CRONE (A spirit medium).

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A MOUNTAIN TRAIL.

SLADE and PEDRO conversing.

SLADE (disguised as a sailor)—You say 'tis here the grant begins, and to the ranch house, how many cables said you 'twas?

PEDRO.—Cables are not mentioned on our maps. I said three leagues from here the ranch house stands; yet as the crow flies 'tis but one. The mountain, though, stands steep, and coated with much chapparel, and horses fare but ill in making their ascent.

SLADE.—Who owns this grant, you call it? Some Spanish caballero?

PEDRO.—No, senor; Americano. Senor Recklaw is the rancher called. I am his major domo, sup'intendent of the ranch. And you?

SLADE.—Me? oh, I am a tramp ashore; but afloat as hardy a chap as ever deserted from a ship.

PEDRO.—And how came you thus far from the big water? Never a ship will wander here.

SLADE.—Granted. Never a ship will wander here. But sailors are at best wild rovers; and weary of the brine, at times they long to get their land legs on. I tell you I deserted. Let that be explanation for you, friend, for it is a long tale o' the sea, and I would rather listen to than bore you with it. I'm bound for the big city; there I'll build me a fo'castle o' the shore and deal in pelts and sea ivory and things, as well's liquor for the sailors, for tars stand before a bar as well's before the mast, and I can fill their ears with briny tales whilst emptying their pockets of the scads earned on a stormy voyage. But this is Greek to you. Tell me of yourself, and of this Senor Recklaw—a jolly chap, I'll wager.

PEDRO.—Senor Recklaw is ne'er jolly, much grief to me. He wraps himself in melancholy as a serape which he wears, and never smiles. I love the old senor, for he is kind to me; and the senorita, his sweet daughter, oh, she is the estrella, the bright star of all the world. In her he's happy.

SLADE.—Ah, so: a daughter, has he? And

he loves the dame. Perhaps to lose her would still more his melancholy thicken. Is't so?

PEDRO.—To lose her, *senor*, that would be as though the sun would never rise again. 'Twould kill him, and he'd sleep beside the *Senor Tolles* whose grave is by the pine upon the backbone of the ridge. Ah, no; blest be the *Virgin*! she must never go. Why said you that, *senor*? Know you aught that her endangers?

SLADE.—Oh, calm your weather, shipmate; I was thinking on the crew I left behind and how they missed me. I wondered if ashore people were made of the same stuff.

PEDRO.—I like not such remark. We love the *senorita*, and if harm befell her, all would grieve.

SLADE.—How came this *Senor Recklaw* to the grant? Dost remember how?

PEDRO.—No more than that he came. Four years—si, five—five winters since he came, and with him the *Estrella*, the *senorita*.

SLADE.—You know not from what port he hailed?

PEDRO.—Nothing more. But why ask you?

SLADE.—Oh, an idle passion, shipmate. I had a captain once named *Recklaw*. I loved him much for the way he put rings on my thumbs when he triced me up. If this were him, I'd like to visit him. Does he talk much o' the sea?

PEDRO.—Never of the sea *senor*, and little of the land; but from the *senorita* I have learned he once was of the East.

SLADE.—Well, 'tis not him. But this is interesting to a land-locked tar. I see the sun is going to anchor, shipmate, and I'll not longer keep you from your cruise. Do you tack o'er the hills or by some channel round about?

PEDRO.—By level trail, The mountain does not for riding in the dusk. And you; where will you pass the night? It is too far,

or the ranch house would give you welcome.

SLADE.—The woods are good enow for me. I've slept at sea in open boat, and, aloft, dozed on a night becalmed. With my tarpaulin for a bunk I'll snore like a fog horn, And, blast their tarry toplights, if the bears come snuffing of my heels I'll climb their riggin' and slit their windpipes amazin'.

PEDRO.—I know not how they kill the bears at sea; but here they're dangerous. And, besides, the ground grows cold when the moon sets past the mid of night. Beyond the ford, but half a league, lives *Chic*, the saddle-tree maker. He will give a welcome to you.

SLADE.—Perhaps 'twere better I find his cabin.

PEDRO.—Beneath the cliffs. You cannot escape it. So, buen trip, *senor*. My horse is here, I go, Adios!

[*Exeunt*]

SLADE.—Now, this is well. I am a sailor. I'd rather he were someone else than *Pedro*, for he has a damned bad eye, and bad eyes in men are worse than even bad tongues in women. But his information is a bonanza to my fund. This is the same *Recklaw*, and he has a daughter. That is well. If he lose her 'twill kill him. Better still. Then he will die by degrees. 'Tis not to be feared that this thick-headed *vaquero* would know me again and it seems not the better programme now to be a sailor longer, though I'll to this *Chic's* rancheria and pump him for more facts, then throw off my disguise and enter upon the game. *Recklaw*, a serpent is on thy trail. I'll drink at thy expense, and the liquor shall be—revenge!

[*Exeunt*].

Enter *MARIA*.

MARIA.—'Tis a strange thing to see a sailor here. And now he talked of some revenge. He must be a madman from off the sea. I heard what he conversed with *Pedro*, and good grounds I see for knowing he my master seeks. Ah, could he hate him

as I hate, he'd dream upon it. But Pedro now is far enough away—I'll mourn and follow. Something may come of this.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—CHIC'S CABIN.

CHIC and SLADE conversing.

SLADE (still disguised).—You seldom have visitors in this climate, have you, mate?

CHIC.—Oh, infrequent. 'Tis far out here. But never of lonesomeness I suffer. The parrot here talks much and sometimes comes the vaquero, to buy of Chic the macarte and the bridle-rein and the saddle-tree. And sometimes comes the Estrella, the senorita, from the grant. Oh, it is never lonesome.

SLADE.—The parrot is a noble bird. Is he a Spaniard?

CHIC.—A sailor bird; comes from the sea; oh, many year ago—six year. But he too much blasphemes. He swear vera mucha.

SLADE.—Then he's a mate o' mine. He's no land lubber, eh?

CHIC.—No, he's a parrot. I no sabe lubber. He look like him?

SLADE.—No, no; you don't catch my drift. Land lubbers are the people o' the shore—land crabs we call 'em. He's a bird o' the sea. Does he sing?

CHIC.—He sing sometime like a sailor drunk. He's the oracle. He say it rain, it rain, sure. When he swear much bad luck is coming. He swear to-day all day. I take him the spring and duck him good; but he swear more. When you come now he hear you, he swear, oh, frightful, frightful! He listen now, bimeby he swear again. Bad luck coming, stranger—bad luck, sure.

SLADE.—There's little in this thing o' luck, old man. I've seen the rats go off a leaky ship and the old tub weathered a gale that would o' sunk a man-o'-war. And I've sailed o' Friday in the worst storm that ever churned outside the heads, and struck clear weather for a year o' cruise. 'Tis a weakness in the brain o' the bird that makes him swear.

CHIC.—Maybeso, maybeso; but always when he swear bad luck will come. He swear when Senor Tolles ride by one night, and the senor found by the trail dead at morning. And ever he swear, just the same—bad luck, bad luck. 'Tis no deception, senor. He's oracle. The bird is ominous, sure.

SLADE.—You say Tolles died by the trail. Was he killed?

CHIC.—Si, senor. Fell off his horse—his neck broke.

SLADE.—And who then bought his ranch?

CHIC.—Senor Recklaw, he bought it. He come from the east somewhere, and his daughter come, too. The senorita—Estrella we call her. She an angel, senor. Once, when I lay here, oh, mucha sick, she come and nurse the old man. I no die, I live; she pull me through.

SLADE.—You think much of her, eh?

CHIC.—Senor, she the stars at night; and if she was not here again, the day would be as if the storm tell always.

SLADE.—It does me good to hear of the sweet dame. I'd like to have you o' the fo'castle on a calm to tell the lads of this fair paragon. They'd forget their grogalistening. Go on, old 'un, is she light or dark? She's fair, I know. I don't fancy her color, and she's short and stout; more against her. If I had time I'd lose a ship length o' my voyage to get a glimpse of her; but I must hurry off your range early the morrow. So I'll remember her as you say she looks. Blow away, mate,

CHIC.—Ah, Chic is glad to see the sailor appreciate. But you should see. To look at her is never to forget. She is not as you say, fair, nor stout. She's dark—black eyes, hair as the night in a storm, and form, ah, exquisite. But 'tis the soul, senor; the mind, which makes this star of earth to shine most admirable. Her mind is as the Mother above. She next the Virgin Maria, perfect.

SLADE.—She must be very fair. No won-

der the old man loves his child. If he should lose her perhaps he'd mourn his life away, eh?

CHIC.—Ah, yes; but 'tis impossible. She cannot so soon die—so young, so good. No fear, señor. She'll live to comfort her old Padre. He a good father, too. Oh, a very good man, Señor Recklaw.

SLADE.—He's rich they say.

CHIC.—Very much rich. Immense in wealth. The grant, six leagues—and cattle and stock—he never can count them.

SLADE.—'Tis nice to be rich thus—rich in a beauteous child and rich in purse. If he but have an easy conscience, that nightmares blacken not his dreams, he is a happy man. Think you his conscience light? Somehow methought a rumor went that he seemed gloomy, as if some deed he'd done sat heavy on his soul. Smiles he ever?

CHIC.—No; never smiles the old señor. Perchance some deed he's done. Who knows? Sometime vaqueros tell me stopping here to speak of things, that in his dreams oft he cries out and much disturbs the ranch. Some ghost they think, walks at his bed. But I know not of this myself.

SLADE.—Perhaps it's but an idle tale. But 'tis growing late and time we were a-bunk, I'd sleep like death to-night if 'twere but in the glory hole of some slave-trading scow, my tramp has tired me so. I may out in the morning at last watch, and if I be agone when you come to, don't miss me. Now, I'll say good bye. We'll both dream we are ashore, to-night; eh, old señor? That is a pleasant dream to Jack at sea. If the parrot swear to-morrow, duck him again, old man. I'll turn in now. Good by.

CHIC.—Buen dreams! Good night!

[SLADE lies on a couch and CHIC sits before the fireplace and nods.

SCENE III.—THE HACIENDA.

A large room with open grate—ALICE and SENOR RECKLAW conversing.

ALICE.—Father, 'tis now five years since

we came hither. Five weary, dreary years they seem to me. You know I've borne with patience its seclusion for your sake, though why you should thus seek to immolate yourself in these far barren wilds I ne'er could see. You said it would not be for long we'd have to stay; that you were overwrought with business and would lose that gloomy mantle from your mind, when for awhile you left those scenes behind. But gloomier you grow. It is this isolation. If you were where society was bright you'd soon be like yourself again.

S. RECKLAW.—My child, I know I do you wrong, and seriously I think of soon returning to society. But I most dread this is a settled melancholy that hath ta'en a seat upon me. I cannot shake it off. It is away at day, but in the night it comes again. Yet 'tis only the effect of overtaxing my capacities—a bad derangement of the mind. I spake but yesterday with a traveler passing by, who knows a market for the grant, and it this does effect a sale, we'll go back to more pleasant scenes. Now rest assured and go to your peaceful couch.

ALICE.—And do you to your rest, father. Thus sitting, poring over the fire, fills up your mind with strange phantasms, and hallucinations, till in your dreams you see repeated what grew out of the dying coals. So this disturbs your sleep. Go now to slumber.

[Kisses him.

And may your dreams be sweet. Good night.

[Exeunt.

S. RECKLAW.—Good night, sweet girl. The shapes of hell that torture me should not pollute the air which thou hast breathed. Pure soul! Little thou knowest the phantasms that sleep does conjure up for me. Not out of dying coals such shapes e'er emanate. They are of hell, and of more infinite horrible form than thou couldst realize. And I commune with these whilst thou of angels dream. Such is the abyss between me and thy soul. I would not ever sleep if I could always wake, but

abstinence too great from slumber is but a gloomy prelude to worse visions. So I must sleep.

[*A knock at the door.*]

Some one knocks—come in.

Enter SLADE.

Welcome sir to my humble rancheria. You are late on the road.

SLADE.—Many thanks, I have been somewhat belated. I've ridden many miles to-day, and could not easily find the ranch-house. But it is all the more to be enjoyed now that 'tis found.

S. RECKLAW.—Just so. I was but now thinking of retiring. But you must have something to break your fast. I will show you to the quarters, and you'll find such as we have at your disposal. Then do you please return, and rest awhile with me.

SLADE.—You will sustain the repute of your people's hospitality. It is world-wide.

S. RECKLAW.—You are thrice welcome. Come, if you please.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—THE SAME.

Enter S. RECKLAW

S. RECKLAW.—That face—'tis hers. The same eyes—a like expression; I see it nightly in my dreams, and now he wears it. Were he herself he could not more become those lineaments. Hath hell contrived a new conceit to torture me? But, no; 'tis only my imagination. A mere coincidence—he does resemble her only as I conceive of it; for she has grown in every bush to me and haunts the very sunbeams in the day. I'll be more brave and live down this too-growing fancy. 'Tis but the cowardice of mind which, taking root, hath spread its branches to my horizon. I'll live it down.

Enter SLADE.

Sir, I hope you have fared well.

SLADE.—Never better. The appetite, born of a pure, dry air and temperance gives sauce where sauce is lacking, and to thy luncheon I have paid respect, than which revellers give not more to their feasts.

S. RECKLAW.—Half of our life lies in gastronomy. The other half divides 'twixt sleep and the waking imagination.

SLADE.—Waking imagination said you well. For our sleepy imagination seems not a part of life but travels us in land of goblins.

S. RECKLAW.—Of that I can speak like a miner, for I have been in that hole myself. Did dreams trouble you ever?

SLADE.—Much once; but I have left them all behind. It is mind weakness to court them, and who courts them not they will abandon.

S. RECKLAW.—Then I must be their flatterer, for I have found them in my slumbers years past.

SLADE.—Shen they genial comrades or villains with you?

S. RECKLAW.—The shades of a deep melancholy. They cloud my days, and my uneasy nights illumine. They are aforesaid and attertime weird haunters of my existence.

SLADE.—It is because thou thinkst on gloomy images. Thou'rt unhappy and brood on it.

S. RECKLAW.—I brood, 'tis fact, for whether from this, or whether we're born to brood, my days are inhabited with immaterialized and wavering shades.

SLADE.—Canst thou not purge thy mind of this melancholy phase, and think the sun shines when it shines? 'Tis time enough for gloom when night is on, or when eclipses shade the earth; but when it's day, what God is blessed as man? Ease thy mind of this dull train of thought and count thyself to sleep, or think on pleasant things. Fair preface to a night means happy dreams.

S. RECKLAW.—Thy words are fair enough and thy philosophy will hold water; but one thing is to think, it is another thing to act.

SLADE.—Thy mild insomnia is a small

disease. But find the physic for it and 'tis cured.

S. RECKLAW.—Ay, but this physic comes not from herbs, nor from the laying on of hands. Nor yet from faith in healing. We must go in the ground to take this cure.

SLADE.—Oh, tut! The ill which death alone can cure are sprung of love in stories. Thou'rt bearded wrong to be so ailing. Go muse on my prescription and think thyself to sleep with pleasant thoughts. Thou'lt see no delirium bugs then in thy dreams. And I'll precede you if it please you, to repose; for I am as sleepy as an ill-paid watchman on his beat.

S. RECKLAW.—I'll show thee to thy couch. Thy room shall be the next to mine, and if thou hear'st me disturbed in slumber do you kindly waken me. 'Tis my mind o'er-taxed that giveth birth to this black nest of shapes. I'll try thy remedy. Come!

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A FOREST NEAR THE HACIENDA.

Enter SLADE

SLADE:—What once suspicion made most sure

Substantial facts now verify,
He is the Recklaw that he was.
My star of destiny attends
In this adventure, It hath brought
Him to my range, and working still
Throws meathwart his bows. Not chance
Could thus have placed him in my power.
He is a doomed and a damned subject
Of the miracle called perverse fate.
Last night I stood beside his couch
And heard him when in dreams
Hot-hand'd demons held him high
O'er hell and threatened him with a drop.
But he escaped into a black
And dismal night, and then he fled,
Pursued by nothing but his fears.
Again he was on earth, and there

The vision of a woman wronged
Stood out before him, and he saw
Unearthed, the dead he lightly damned
When life was Springtime with him.
She was a beauteous vision to him;
She changed into a horrid hag
And mocked him with her toothless gums
And bony fingers, till he fled again.
Then last, he viewed her face, as 'twere,
Renewed in mine, and shrieked and woke.
I told him he but muttered then,
And calmed him, though 'twould have
been sweet

As life itself to've killed him there.
Yet he's saved for worse than shambles,
Let me review the scene that's here,
That it may be not cool a day:

I had a sister; she a brother
Had. Say I, he was steep'd in crime.
But she was pure, and so unstained,
And being pure, it follows that
Who wreck'd her was ev'n a pirate.
Now she was made an orphan soon
And so was I. I was shipped here
To learn bad ways, but she, per form,
Was made a daughter to a man
Who taught her some accomplishments.
She grew more fair and beautiful
Than lily afield, and as sweet
As mignonette, till he who was
Her guardian did give way to lust,
And did a wrong he'd ne'er repair.
Then turned her on the world to die.
He fled his conscience to this wild;
But here, even here, the voice pursues.
'Twas long ago I learned the tale
And long I have his refuge sought.
I came to tell him of his crime
And then to slay him for't. But now
Another phase comes up—To kill,
Is but to rob a man of nothing.
Dead he feels not what he loses;
For being dead he knows not he is dead.
Then follows it that this revenge
Would thwart. But if he losses aught
And lives to know his loss, then is
He robbed indeed. So I attend
Myself and hearken to a plan,
A perfect plan, which has not been
Matured for naught. What he once did,

Now I will do, though hell does yawn,
And worlds frown at the direful deed.
I'll wreak upon his daughter what
He on my sister wrought. I'll win
The love of this sweet dame, and with
Her love, I'll draw the fatal bow
Which shall rain shafts of vengeance down
Upon him. It is well thought out.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST.

Enter SLADE and SENOR RECKLAW.

S. RECKLAW:— 'Tis pleasant sight
To see a new face here, recent
From civilization. Too much
Of rest makes man a restless worm,
And here we get too much of 't.
Without congenial associates,
'Tis as the food 'thout condiments
Or variety, that satiates
And galls the appetite. There is
Even a rapidity in rest
Which urges lagging pace, and prods
The slumbering brain to a purpose,
Without purpose; 'tis as a chase
Without the goal. I wish to speak
With you on diverse things, and so,
I've sought you out.

SLADE:—I listen, senior, your servant.

S. RECKLAW:—My sleep, then was last
night
Rounded up with unusual dreams
That bode no good, I fear. For dreams,
When formed not of a tangible
And real indigestion, have
Prescience in them. Overfed
Nightmares may prance on thin air
And find birth in fat suppers;
But what shall we say of the shapes
Which come and sit upon us out of night,
And with some occult vision say
What is to be? Perhaps I speak
In riddles to you?

SLADE:— Not at all.
I attend your speech, and answer
This: Dreams are off from stomachs
Formed, and do rise from ill digest

Of meal; but as the beam doth break
An intervening object; so
The mind is turned on trifles oft.
We dream awake and sleeping dream—
Each is a dream. When we do wish
Some vision into shape awake,
That is a dream; likewise, asleep
Some waking part of this machine
Of mind does conjure up some tale,
And after, forgetting how it came,
We, waking, marvel at the occult.
Thy dreams are imagery.

S. RECKLAW:—Would 'twere so.
But so much to me comes to show
That they're inspired, I cannot think
Them only dreams. Listen my dream:

SLADE:—I listen.

S. RECKLAW:— Methought, last night,
alone I stood
Upon a lonesome plain. 'Twas dark—
I say 'twas more than dark; for ne'er
Such blackness hung o'er earth
Before. I knew not where I was
More than I stood on earth. A sound
Rose round me, as though sweetest strains
E'er born of music upon earth
Had there condensed and issued forth
In one combined harmony.
They soothed me as aromatic
Opiate might, and I lost sense,
In time, I woke again, and now
'Twas gloomy still; but I was not
On earth. I seemed sustained in air.
The music still attended there.
Anon, the gloom to twilight passed.
And then irradiance, as from
A hidden sun poured round about.
By this I viewed a city hung
In air, and into it I passed.
Was this a dream?

SLADE:— Go on.

S. RECKLAW:— This city then
Was of a thousand beauteous gates,
And mansions grander than poet
E'er dreamed reached through all space. I
gazed
Intoxicated with the view;
But it nor yet the music
Perpetual, gave surfeit eye.

I was possessed of appetite
Fit to drink such bliss forever.
Seems this a dream?

SLADE;—A gilded nightmare
Rather. But proceed.

S. RECKLAW.—There I stood,
And viewed a clouded canopy
Of hues more manifold than those
That fret the burning sundown sky.
And as I looked I deemed, betimes
That something seemed some form, and
then

By metamorphosis that form
Immediate it was. Fair girls
I thus brought into shape, and, too,
Friends who were dead, and loved ones
gone

For years and years. I strayed along
The gold-paved streets alone, for here
No tenant nor inhabitant
I saw. At last I stopped before
A temple richer than the sum
Of the others. 'Twas the paragon
And essence of all beauty and
Magnificence. I entered there,
Me and my cloud of melody,
For this on me attended still.
The walls kaleidoscopic scenes
Presented, which gave me new thrills
Of pleasure. A gallery stood
Above, and it I entered soon.
Then had I company.

SLADE:— This was
A dream within another dream.

S. RECKLAW:—Listen. Around this fairest
room

Were fairer maids a score, and they
Were beauteous in proportion as
Their sphere. None offered seat to me
But left me there to stand within
Their circle. A withered crone
At last came in, who had wound round
About her form a serpent, big
But beauteous. The dames then sang,
The crone a dirge did chant, the snake
Unwound his myriad folds, and went
With open jaws and striking fang
Around the awful gallery.
At last he came to me and took

Me in his lovely rope. I felt
The hot breath from his jeweled throat
Upon my cheek, and it inhaled.
Then changed he form, and was a man,
Of mighty build and black as gloom.
Even as I gazed on him the scene
Changed, and I viewed, where were the fair
And radiant maids, a train of hags.
The gallery was a livid hell.

SLADE:—Now was thy nightmare at a
trot.

S. RECKLAW:— I thought to shriek; my
voice was lost
In a dull whisper. I could move
Nor hand nor limb. This negro, then,
Me lifting, as waves lift ships,
Hurled me far out in the deep, red
Abyss of flame. I sank into
That hellish fire, nor ever ceased
Whilst conscious yet, down thro' the flames
To fall. At last oblivion came
And blotted out my flight.

SLADE:—'Twas an inconstant dream.
Thy cook mixed up too many stuffs
And viands in thy supper, else
Thou wouldst not have experienced
Such diverse sensation.

S. RECK:— I cannot think
Such dreams are born of earth. Before
Have I had a presentiment
In like horrid shape, and methinks
This hath a reveled skein of much
And various import. If thou,
With thy philosophy (for seems
Thy wisdom some) canst make naught of it,
I'll take this troubled dream of mine
To the old hag, who hereabout
Is sibyl to the inhabitants.
She hath full well interpreted
Deep dreams before. What says my guest?

SLADE:—'Twas the brat of indigestion.
The world may be a dream, and life
A nightmare, for we are so poor
In that which makes a fact that we,
Though living, cannot say we live.
Yet such fastidious and fantastic
Tale hath fabric in it which makes
It certain that who dreamed it was

Not all asleep

I'll tell a dream,
Which happed to me. 'Tis but a dream,
A sleeping dream, 'bout guilt and with
No rich embellishment. 'Tis such
A gaudy dream as Christmas feast
Creates when crowing cock half wakes
The drowsy reveller. Now hear.

S. RECKLAW:—I'll hear it to the end.

SLADE:— Then thou'rt
Polite and courteous, for with it
I've talked to snoring many a guest,
When I was host in distant home.

S. RECKLAW:—I could list' to the recital
Of strange dreams from now till never,
Such fascination they do hold
For me. Go on, I listen.

SLADE:— Then this is it:
Once when I slept, methought I passed
From living to another sphere
(I'll be as brief and circumspect
As 'tis pleasant). There were no homes
Upon this globe, and nothing came
To view, save, distant but a mile,
A woody grove, an oasis.
For desert was the rest. I paused,
Long contemplating the wild scene,
Which grew more wild, as lonesome, then
Methought the night came on the hill,
And soon it would be dark.
So, starting toward the grove I sped,
Wishing for shelter from such night,
And from, perchance, what horrors were
Indenizen there. The grove I reached
At last upon the verge of night.
Within it was the gaping mouth
Of a dark cave, whose bowels reached
Deep i' the earth. 'Twas guarded well—
On one side high a demon stood,
Steeled in rich mail and iron-faced,
The other did a dwarf protect,
Unarmed and pleasant visaged he.
I spoke to each, and each to me
Turned mute, immobile face, nor word
Vouchsafed me when I spake again.
Then I, to escape the night, even if
Into a deeper night, made pass
To probe the weakly dwarf's entrance.
He forced me back with such an ease,

As might a giant use to break
A straw. Then to the demon's part
I strode, and when he did confront
Me with a huge topped spear, I struck
Him forceful blow, and o'er his fallen
And senseless form stepped to the cave.
'Twas black within; but far ahead
A myriad twinkling lights came up
To view, and for those stars I steered.
At last I reached a roomy vault,
Where there were many women round,
At various employments, but
The most did sing.

S. RECKLAW:— 'Tis such a dream
I love to hear told of. Proceed.

SLADE:— They sang of love.

S. RECKLAW:—As it was meet they should.
Love is their meat.

SLADE:— I say, they sang of love.
A beauteous dame, who, towering, stood,
By virtue of her beauty, o'er
All the ch'ir, esp'ying me, gave
Beck that I should join her
At her throne. There I went and sat
Me at her glorious feet, and heard
The glorious song. This ended, they
Dispersed, and all came silent then.

S. RECKLAW:—A marvelous dream.

SLADE:— Most marvelous what
Remains to tell. When pressed to speak
Upon her history and condition,
The beauteous queen replied, thus wise;
There they incelled were a time,
To purge their worldly souls for loss
Of virtue upon earth. Each was
A sufferer in this cause. They all,
Repentant, there wept for the past,
And on betrayers curses heaped.
Her tale resumed, to me she told
That she once was an orphan left.
And in that state, adopt by law,
Passed to the hearth of one who was
Graced with much wealth.

S. RECKLAW: If you are tired
I'll hear that dream at other time.
'Tis a fair dream; but morning wanes
And noon comes on. Would you not be
More pleased to rest?

SLADE:— 'Tis almost told.
I'd rather give't all out now.
This man of wealth, I dreamed she said,
Did compass her with all comforts,
'Till she passed the sweet equator
Where woman's latitude begins;
And then, most horrid to relate,
He did betray her, and crush out
The young flower of her life. She went
To wander in the world and died,
Of shame, of very grief she died,
That was a vivid dream, was't not?

S. RECKLAW:— As lightning on a storm,
Was this a very dream?

SLADE:— A very sleeping dream,
I do assure you. Was it not
A moral nightmare?

S. RECKLAW:— Excuse me, but
It grows most dull—we'll hear the end
At other time. I have forgot
A duty which I soon would do.
Thou may'st here stay awhile,
And I'll return anon. Spare me.

SLADE:— Oh, if you will.
But at another time the rest
Thou'lt hear. I know thou'lt grow most
fond
Of it at last.

S. RECKLAW:— Do not miss me.

SLADE:— Not I. I am thy servant,
And these birds shall sing for me till
Thou dost return.

[Exit RECKLAW.]

Now did I hit
The demon in his soul and made
The brute to wince. How he did pale
And shaky grow. I'll tell the rest
And balance of that dream to him
When it is meet. Methinks its dirge
Will sing into his ear till night
And day rise up and set for him
No more. Its impress on his brain
I'll make till even the worms and bug
That to his carcass inherit
Shall traces find of the black tale
There i' the grave.

Oh, man, that hath
A mind to reason with, how void
Of reason art thou! In passion,

How like a ship in storm, chartless.
Thou art, at once, the hunter and
The prey. But he's my game and him I'll
follow,
Though burning hell both him and me may
swallow.

[Exit.]

SCENE III.—A ROOM IN THE HACIENDA

Enter MARIA.

MARIA:—I wish I had been born a man,
For half my life is filled with frights,
Half with waiting to be 'frighted,
And only a quarter has peace.
The other quarter is half crammed
With dread of lashings or with fear
Or something worse. In short, my fears
Stick me like needles every day,
I'd trade 'em for a quick conscience
With the first pack peddler happ'ning by
If pack peddlers had consciences.
But could I be a man—ah, then
I'd fear nothing. I'd mount a horse
And take a rifle, and ride roads,
And steal girls, and rob stages, and then,
I'd take old senor Recklaw's self,
Bones, ills and all, to my deep cave
And cut out his tongue and burn him,
For having me whipped. And Pedro,
Who plied the lash, I'd burn his eyes
Set him in the darkest corner.
And give him a bright light to read
His thoughts by. There's Jingo the cook—
He called me a wench; he's a nigger.
I'd kill him for my luck. Mistress
Alice I'd steal away, and lay her
Down on some bright island; she is
An angel, though I do say it,
Hating the devil, her father
As I do. There is Chic—I'd save
Him to make all my saddle trees,
And his parrot should teach me oaths,
For he swears, a credit to him
Who was his teacher. I would call
Him Polly, and he'd be my luck.
No; killing the nigger'd be luck,
Enough luck for anybody.
Then I'd steal a husband, some one

Like the handsome traveler, him
Who came last night. Then happy me.
Here mistress comes, and right now
I think were I a man, herself
I'd wed, and not be land pirate,
After all.

Enter ALICE.

ALICE:—Maria are you here?

MARIA.— Yes, mistress, for I am afraid
To be elsewhere.

ALICE:—Well, what is the matter now?

MARIA:—I've seen a ghost last night.

ALICE:— A ghost? Silly maid there are
none.

MARIA:—That there are none
Will not convince one who views them.
I saw my ghost, and he had an eye
Built like a moon, and just as large,
And he was bigger than the butt
Of any tree, and had on all white.

ALICE:—Where did you see this thing?

MARIA:—I won't say where, mistress.
My back is sore from the last lash
I got, and if my fool tongue talks
And gets my back in further scrape,
Why my back will get its back up.

ALICE:—What nonsense do you talk.
Say where you saw this thing and how.

MARIA:—With my eyes was how,
And in the hacienda where.
Now, sweet mistress, there's all of it.

ALICE:—You do try patience
Say what you saw.

MARIA:—And you'll not let them flog
of me?

ALICE:—Not if your trifling cease.

MARIA:— Then in your father's room it
was.

Listen at mid of night an owl
Sat in a pine outside my room,
And hooted melaucholy there,
As is some evil spirit stirred
His rest. It wakened me, and
I did listen soft, and then—

ALICE:— Well, foolish, and then—

MARIA:—And then—

ALICE:—Will you be sensible for once?
Say what this was.

MARIA:—And then, mistress,
I heard your father shriek, as one
Who might a devil clutch. I rose
And peered out from my chamber.
And I saw the ghost, mistress. Never,
Oh, never I can sleep again;

ALICE:—Where was this?

MARIA:— In your father's room.
The door stood 'jar; the moon a pale
And saddened light cast through the pane,
Flooding his couch. This spook stood there,
A shape most gaunt and horrible,
In its hand a blade I saw.
Seemed it the ghost would stab—
Your father, and I tried to shriek,
But my tongue stood tied in my mouth.
I could not but gaze steadfast,
And then your father, mistress, woke,
And with the ghost did speak. 'Twas then
I swooned and fainting fell and lay
Till morning on the stony floor.

ALICE:—This was a quick distempered
dream

Say nothing more of it,

MARIA:— Not I.
My back says to be mum.

MARIA:— Did you dream aught else?

MARIA:—Not last night sweet mistress;
But this morning when fast awake
I dreamed a handsome stranger came
And stayed awhile I viewed him cast
Fond glance at you, when you passed out,
To walk in the garden near.
His glance spoke of soft flame, I thought.

ALICE:—You are a foolish maid.
Still, you may mark his further glance.
'Twill keep you from worse mischief. Now
Call my father to meal. 'Tis noon.

[*Exit MARIA*]

ALICE:—Something upon my father's life
Treads like a shadow, it is sure.
But what it is I ne'er could tell.
His sleep is often thus disturbed,
Until mean rumors are afloat,
And 'mong the ignorant drivers

And the herders pass tales that he is
 A sorcerer, and seances
 Holds with the dead. This is a strange
 Thing which Maria tells. And there
 Must be more to it than nothing.
 Something she saw, but what it is,
 Who knows? Ah, my poor sad father,
 What can be this rude fate of thine,
 Which even I must not know of?
 I fear thou sayest true, it is
 A settled melancholy. They're
 Of the earth unearthly, scenes
 That haunt thy slumbers and
 Possess thy waking hours. I feel
 A presage rising up in me
 That something dire will fall on thee,
 Which naught from me can e'er o'ercome.
 But what e'er may befall, let me
 Thy doom share with thee. Thou'rt to me
 All that there is of earth. Without
 Thee the world were blank, and pleasure
 Void of joy. I'll pray again for thee.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—THE HUT OF THE CRONE

Enter S. RECKLAW

S. RECKLAW.—Good day Senora.

CRONE:— 'Tis the Senor.

S. RECK:— It is. I have come to test
 The knowledge which, if rumor's truth
 Thou hast of things unearthly. Say
 Canst thou unravel dreams?

CRONE:—Had the Senor a dream wrought
 by
 Good spirits, I could; but of dreams
 Told in thine ear by malcontents
 Of the upper spheres, I know naught.

S. RECK:— It was a happy dream at
 first,
 With horrors after.

CRONE:—Thou need'st not tell it,
 I have it here. Thy dream was first
 Of a fair city and fair scenes.
 That means, thou hast surroundings fair.
 The joys thy dream portrayed were these,
 Thy joys now enjoyed.

S. RECK:— Thou art
 In truth a seeress.

CRONE:—I see a change come o'er the
 scene.

A man of mien terrible, and
 Of purpose black, hath hurled thee high
 In air, thou falling forever
 To pain and misery. There is
 A hag, who doth this man bring forth.
 She is thy evil star on earth.
 There is above thee a black fate
 Hanging. This man is a mortal.
 I can tell thee no more.

S. RECKLAW:— Go on.

Conjure again thy troop of devils
 To thee, and I'll give thee
 Hut of gold. Who is the man?
 Whence does he come?

CRONE:— I can say thee
 No more. The spell is broken.

S. RECKLAW:—Again, again! Here is thy
 gold.

CRONE:—The spell is broken.

S. RECKLAW:—Broken! Broken! Per-
 chance they'll come
 At night again. Thy sorcery
 Wind up once more, and if thou canst
 Say who he is, I'll make a queen
 Of thee.

CRONE:—Leave me, senor. 'Tis not
 Of me more to impart.
 The spirit's done.

S. RECKLAW:— I'll come again.
 Even if the devil be thy aid,
 Tell me more. Remember, gold! gold!

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—THE HACIENDA GARDEN.

Enter SLADE

SLADE.—This seems the haunt of dreams.
 Never till now one moved my soul;
 But when I slept last night, visions
 Peopled my slumbers, and I saw
 More beauteous things than are read of,
 Enough a'most to move me from

My settled purpose. First I thought
 A fair and stately dame came on
 With face as mild as new-born babe's,
 Who said to me: Love shall o'er hate
 Prevail. She disappeared, and then
 I lived a fleeting age with pure
 And holy things. More good in those
 Too transient hours I knew than in
 The gloomy substance of my days.
 I deemed I changed from what I was,
 Let fall the black cloak of the past
 And swore there to begin again,
 And count what was dark guidepost
 For better deeds to come. Yet, as
 I stood thus, shedding Nature's dross,
 A ghost rose up, and, speaking, said:
 I am what was thy wronged sister;
 Remember me. Then all the good
 Did fade, and I became again
 A dweller in the past. From hence
 No dream can turn the tide. I'll drift
 Whither the current Revenge may flow.
 Here Alice comes. She is a fond
 And duteous maid, and would a wife
 Make fit for prince. I note she looks
 With favor on me, and I feel
 A growing love for her move me.
 But this thing love must die; for I
 Must a dissembler be, and not
 A lover. Such souls as my soul
 Love hotly when alove; but I,
 Though I should love her with a flame
 Most turnace hot, would quench it all
 With my revenge.

Enter ALICE,

ALICE:— Good day, sir.
 'Tis a pleasant day.

SLADE:— More pleasant.
 Madam, that you are in it.

ALICE:—You softly speak, as one who has
 Seen the world. Flattery, methinks,
 Is the language of the wide world.

SLADE:—I did speak in truth. What I
 said
 Was that two suns make brighter day
 Than one. Thou'rt the fair daughter
 Of thy father; but thou art, too,

A dazzling sun, If flattery does
 Find mansion in the truth, then it
 May dwell in this.

ALICE:—That I am sun and daughter, too,
 Does credit to thy wit. But he
 Who into flattery descends
 Offends good taste.

SLADE:— 'Tis mooted point
 If truth be flattery.
 I think thee beautiful and pure
 And noble, and I tell thee of 't.
 Is that a flattery? I say
 Thou art more lovely than the rose,
 Sweeter than cereus and frank
 As truth is frank. Is 't flattery
 To tell thee so?

ALICE:— All's flattery
 In man, which he presents to view
 Of her he courts. Be he not deep,
 His flattery comes in words. Be
 He not novice in the trade of love
 (For love's a trade these days), he tells
 His compliments in his actions.
 Think'st thou her pure and worthy, then
 Should'st thou softly tell her so by
 Thy respect; if frank, by being
 Frank in thy turn; if lovable,
 By loving her. Yet thinking her
 But surface brained and with vain thought,
 Thy words should vain and shallow be
 Proportioned with the object.

SLADE:— This
 Comes as from an oracie.
 So, I must be a shallow swain,
 And I must deem thee vain, knowing
 It not; for I can ne'er repress
 The vain, impeaching words that rise
 To say how like a perfect flower
 Thou art.

ALICE:—Well, then, be vain. It is
 A touching failing, after all.
 Wilt thou come to the house? Thou art
 As yet a stranger to our home.

SLADE:—It needeth but thy bidding, and
 I'd compass worlds. We'll go.

[Exeunt]

SCENE II.—A ROOM IN THE
HACIENDA.*Enter MARIA.*

MARIA:—I once was where, when I had a choice morsel of gossip, I could find husband-pecking wives to share it with. But here I must set on it myself and take care of the brood of chicks from it alone. Alice will not listen to me when I tell her of happenings, and the crone knows them before I do, so I must talk to a looking glass and fancy in it an auditor. Alice might stay to hear what now I'd have to say; but to tell her of it would be to spoil this hatching brood of devilment. That sailor who once swore revenge behind the back of Pedro, is in this visitor, and he works his plan of vengeance on the master with good speed. I know not why he wants revenge; but to compass it, he will sweet Alice steal. So I have heard him tell himself. Now I will help this working to be worked, and rearward of the event will sweetly laugh to see the master of his daughter done. When she has gone to be the stranger's bride, then I will plan to follow. Left to his dreams the good Senor may have them whipped; I will away where whips do never come.

Enter CHIC.

CHIC:—Mucha the old man is disturbed. The parrot swear, oh, ever swear; barrasco, bad luck is coming. For Chic I care not; but on these friends what if bad luck should fall? Ah, no upon Chic let fall this evil. Let his old head feel the dull stroke, and Chic will smile, si, smile at the bad star.

Oh, senorita; good day.

MARIA:—Good day? No, it's a bad day; you pile of humps and ugliness. I wish I could swear like your bird, you imp, you. I'd make your hair stand. What do you come here for? To tell the devil, my master, that you would like to build a fire under me? Ugh! You homely bag of sin, you.

CHIC:—The senorita, is she mad? Ah, all goes wrong. The parrot swear; I

say all will go wrong. Angel mio, sweet senorita, what for is Chic thus cursed? Never he did you harm.

MARIA:—Small thanks to you. If you were set to't by the master you'd harm me fast. Where is your cursing parrot now? For why is he not here with you?

CHIC:—Senorita, the bird is malo. He swear and swear; nothing stop him. Last night I teach him prayers to say; but when of holy things he speak, immediate he swear, awful. He riddle my prayer with oaths. Senorita, I tell you sure, bad luck is coming.

MARIA:—Of course, bad luck is coming, when Senor Recklaw has the ghosts to bed with him, and has me beat the way he does.

CHIC:—The senor ghosts? Senorita, how know you that?

MARIA:—I saw one at his bed. But it's none of your business. Don't tell anybody that I told you of this, or I'll—ugh, you monster!

[Exeunt.]

CHIC:—'Twas the diablo, who as a sailor come, and slept in Chic's rancheria. I knew it, when he vanish in the night, and now he make it all malo.

*[Exit.]*SCENE III.—ANOTHER ROOM IN
THE HACIENDA.*Enter S. RECKLAW.*

S. RECKLAW:—There now remains no doubt, to clog

My understanding, and to clog
The workings of my scheme. Methought
Her face he wore, and now I know
'Twas no imaging. The conscience
Which is quick, no sneecure enjoys,
But watches ever, and in its midnight
Mounts describes the menace of
Portending deeds. Infirm of will,
And with clothed courage damned,
'Tis not in me to make his murder
The second to my first; though now
That conscience holds his plot to view.
There is a retribution, which grasps hands

With Fate, and stalks a harpy, dogging
 Every crime. Age walks not with a limp
 More sure than it shall garner up
 The yield, when time is ripe.
 And so it treads my footprints out.
 Yet he may die, and, dying, leave
 No heir to press his suit.
 Should he depart the stage, perchance
 No player of his part would ever cross
 My vision more. Say, then, he's dead.
 'Twere but an oral act. 'Twere as to tell
 The order of a simple feat
 Upon the range.
 And, so, 'twere done, and not a bubble
 Would mark wherein he sank
 Fathoms down that shoreless sea.
 That order will I speak. It must be so.

Enter PEDRO.

Pedro, thee I have summoned
 On grave affair. Thy blade needs be
 Sharpened, for thou'lt have use for it.
 Marked thou the stranger who a week
 Has passed my guest?

PEDRO:— Him I have seen.

S. RECKLAW:—He is a hater of thy race,
 And calls thee greaser. Me he threatens
 In secret, and the witch tells me
 My death he meditates. If he
 Should be found dead to-morrow morn,
 In some by-way, 'twould seem to be
 A lucky accident. Dost see?

PEDRO:—Men have a way of dying when
 You wish them ill. I never failed
 My master in such need, did I?

S. RECKLAW:—Thou com'st to time like
 a good clock,
 Pedro, and I prize thy service.

PEDRO:—I prize thy rude kindness,
 master,
 Above my conscience. Thy command
 Is Pedro's religion. He dies.

[Exeunt.]

S. RECKLAW:—Thou art a good Pedro, as go
 Devils, and as obedient as
 A murderous automaton. I
 Rest assured, he dies to-night.

[Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A ROOM IN THE HACIENDA

Enter RECKLAW AND TWO VACQUEROS.

1ST V:—Senor, we come to say that
 Pedro has been found.

S. RECK:—I heard not that Pedro had
 been lost; but being found presumes his
 loss. Where was he found?

2D V:—In the wood. I found him.

1ST V:—I found him as we'll. 'Twas I
 that saw the blood first.

S. RECK:—Blood! Said you blood? Pedro's
 blood?

1ST V:—Si, senor: Pedro was a bloody
 Pedro, and lay as though he fought at
 death as fierce as he was wont to fight at
 the fandango.

2D V:—A settled hate shone in his star-
 ring eye, and his huge blade was turned i'
 the earth as if he'd found sheath for 't in
 the bowel of some hated gringo.

1ST V:—And the ground torn up showed
 that he struggled hard for the prize of
 living. Some giant from another land
 must o' put out his light. None lived by
 the saddle who could stand up before him.

S. RECK:—Is the stranger on the ranch?

1ST V:—Senor, the stranger has not
 been seen this day.

2D V:—And the best two horses of the
 range are absent.

S. RECK:—Call up the herders! Scour
 the world! Spare not horseflesh to over-
 take this stranger! Who brings his head
 to me will be successor to dead Pedro.
 Begone!

[Exit VACQUEROS.]

Enter MARIA.

MARIA:—Maria save us, senor; my mis-
 tress is not to be found.

S. RECK:—Say that again. Not to be
 found?

MARIA:—She is not in the hacienda, nor on the grounds. I've searched for her and called on her in vain.

S. RECK:—Caramba! This is much too much. He has done this to me, too. Go, summon the crone to me—the witch—bring me the witch.

[Exit MARIA.]

I'll know his route and have him quartered with four lariats.

[Exit.]

SCENE II.—THE SAME.

RECKLAW and the CRONE.

S. RECK:—I sent for thee. Tell me what I ask of thee, or I'll have thee strangled in thy den among thy devils. A stranger has killed the valiant and reliable Pedro; he has stolen my beautiful daughter, and what is a sin upon the range as bad, my best horses bear him toward safety. Tell me his route—where may he be pursued?

CRONE:—The scene is black—but now there comes a distant and miniature portrayal of something. Methinks thou wouldst know naught of it.

S. RECK:—But once comes that eternal minute in the life of man, which lasts with time; and I have known and suffered this. I'll view it, though ten perditions. All hell were but a scorching flash to what I have endured. Speak on.

CRONE:—I see a corpse.

S. RECK:—Well done; it is his bloated corpse. Died he hard?

CRONE:—I see a corpse and two graves.

S. RECK:—Pedro and he fill equal graves. 'Tis well.

CRONE:—The corpse I see is of a woman, a beautiful corpse.

S. RECK:—Look well at that; deceive me of't and your life is forfeit. Did he kill her because she would follow him not? Oh! if this be so, earth will too small and space too shallow be, for him to elude my vengeance. Look well at that.

CRONE:—She was thy daughter. Her insensate form I see within this house and thou bendst o'er it distracted. I see a man stand by. He is the giant of thy dream. Two graves come on again and all is black.

S. RECK:—Proceed. What else does this camera of thy delirium catch? What else, I say?

CRONE:—'Tis darkness all. The spell is past.

S. RECK:—Canst thou see no more?

CRONE:—The spell is past.

S. RECK:—Then get thee hence. Thou liest, thou concubine of the devil's. Begone!

CRONE:—'Tis the spirits that say it. Mark it well, senor.

[Exeunt.]

S. RECK:—It is a lie! a lie! a black and damnable falsehood! I am a fool to trust this hag's drivings apace. But he must be o'ertaken; he must die.

[Exit.]

SCENE III.—A PLACE IN THE CITY.

ALICE and SLADE conversing.

ALICE:—Thou wouldst not leave me thus. Think on it. What would become of me?

SLADE:—To thy father thou mayst return.

ALICE:—Oh, this must not be. Hast forgotten what 'twas thou promised when I leaned on thy honor? that we came hither to awhile escape my father's anger and that cooled, I would return thy bride with thee of him. Where now is thy promise?

SLADE:—My promises are buried with my conscience—in the sea. I loved thee and I love thee now, better than all, that breathes; yet I will make thee another sacrifice upon the altar of my vengeance. We part to-night forever. Though I did love thee with thrice a mother's fondness for her suckling babe, yet thou must be abandoned. I've sworn it to the ghost of her, who was my sister.

ALICE:—If this must be, God has forgotten justice, and man is more than brutish. But I will bear it for thy sake; for though thou wronged me thrice, yet, I would love thee more than ever man was loved before.

SLADE:—So, we part. Go to thy father, and tell him that thus I have redeemed a sister's broken honor upon him. I go. Farewell!

[*Exeunt.*]

ALICE:—Oh, if thou wert in mercy mild as thou art terrible in vengeance, thou wouldst be a very god!

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A ROOM IN THE HACIENDA —RECKLAW PACING THE FLOOR.

S. RECKLAW:—They find him not. He is beyond the swiftest of my riders and will not be overtaken now. But let him go. I tire of blood, and my soul, like a weary mind longs for rest. Rest! Ay; but it cannot rest. Oh, Alice! and thou hast forgotten me, too. That is the stab which burns most deep. An ingrate child to find in thee, were as a heart-thrust from my own right hand. I never deserved the blow from thee. No thorns grew in the garden of thy life, my child, or, growing there, 'twas mine to prune them. I'll wait for thee to come again and ask forgiveness of thy poor old father, and when thou comest, these weary arms shall fold thee to this stormy breast and thou mayst rest upon it as did thy infant head. But who shall cheer my night till then?

[*A noise without.*]

What noise was that that rose above the blast—it sounded like a moan—but 'twas my fancy. How grows this fever upon me. The gloom is spectral with weird shapes and noises horrible. Can this be madness coming on?

[*The noise repeated.*]

Again. I will step forth and see what vexes even this tempest. 'Twas sure a moan; what if it be? But it cannot be my child.

(*Recklaw opens the door and steps out into the night, returning he has the inanimate form of his daughter in his arms, which he lays upon the floor.*)

Art thou Alice? Didst thou speak? Didst ask forgiveness? Oh, hear me say it, that thou'rt forgiven. Speak to me! She speaks not!

(*Kisses her.*)

That mouth is cold. Oh, lips that now are dumb, sweet voice that speaks no more! Alice art thou dead?

(*Drags the body to another room and returns alone.*)

Oh, this cannot be—it cannot be? They say she's dead—but she cannot thus die. It cannot be. I know it cannot be.

(*A pause.*)

But now the dream is past. She is not dead—I knew she was not dead!

[*Enter SLADE.*]

Ah, stranger; welcome.

SLADE:—Dost thou me remember? I am The brother to her that was my sister. I come to tell thee what followed In that dream.

S. RECKLAW:—And hast thou, too, had dreams.

Dreams, sir, are the people who dwell in sleep.

SLADE:—What, mad?

S. RECKLAW:—I did here dream an hour ago

That my sweet daughter was no more. The dreams did pinch my ear and yell into my ear, your daughter's dead! Your daughter's dead! ha, ha! And then I thought I saw her sad, bright eyes Forever sealed, and her fond mouth Which ever did assure me with Its kiss was mute and hushed; and so I cried: It cannot be; And woke myself still crying out, It cannot be.

But now the dreams are gone back to,

Their habitations in the night.
And I shall never sleep again.

SLADE:—Oh, revenge and is this for what
I courted thee?

I thought here now to tell him that
This was what followed of that dream.
To say I was a brother to
That sister wronged
Who thus made retribution on him,
And now he minds me not—he is all mad.

S. RECKLAW:—Mad didst thou say?
That is insanity, rather—
What know we of insanity,
Save that it have extreme and mean?
We are sane but in a degree;
For to be sane were to be perfect.
And sanity's that pole
Of reason which no man hath reached.
And if this globe of mind do burst
What is it but a bubble wrecked.
There is no tide
But washes to some shore, and we
Upon the current of this stream
Of time drift on sweet banks or in
The breakers perish. What matters it?
The bosom of that oblivion
Is as the sleep which mantles kings
With peace and brings to beggars
Surcease from beggary.
I vex thee with my tales.
The stars are now apace and I
Must my sweet daughter find, for she
Has wandered in the night

{*Exeunt.*

SLADE:—I too, will seek the night. Hence-
forth, all must be night. Oh, vengeance!
Thou art the bolt which strikes back on the
cloud which nurseth thee.

{*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A MISSION—THE PADRE IN THE PORCH.

Enter S. RECKLAW.

PRIEST:—Buenos dias, Senor; it is a fair
day.

S. RECKLAW:—'Tis a fair day to him who
sees fair, but to him who has a clouded eye
'tis clouded.

PRIEST:—Is there aught the church can
do for thee, Senor?

S. RECKLAW:—Aye, is there? My daugh-
ter wanders in the world. If thou'rt the
conjurer thou'rt said to be tell me whereon
she roams.

PRIEST:—I am no conjurer, Senor. I am
a physician who heals the soul. If thou
need'st something in this practice my hum-
ble worth is at your disposal.

S. RECKLAW:—Heel the sole. There is in
this material for a fool to mold a jest that
might outlive a holiday. Dost thou tell of
the future too?

PRIEST:—Not in extent but in degree I do.
I'll tell the wayfarer who here delays and
rests him of his load of sins that his journey
hence will go the lighter; but the traveller
who fares on and carries still his load of sins,
his travels will grow weary.

S. RECKLAW:—Padre, thou hast spoken
truth. This sin is an usurer who asks much
interest. But is thy trade congenial to thy
purse?

PRIEST:—I have no purse but my con-
science, Senor, and that is always empty.

S. RECKLAW:—Then thou art happy.
Were I moulded again, I'd be a priest.

PRIEST:—Thy words are fair. And wilt
thou not, Senor, give me thy roll of sins.
I'll hoard them away where they will draw
no usury.

S. RECKLAW:—Too late. 'Tis vain in the
unlamped night to shade the broken eyes.

PRIEST:—'Tis ne'er too late for this.

S. RECKLAW:—Oh what is this to me. Go
take my head for a drumhead, and beat a
deadmarch on it; give my liver to death;
put my brain in the stomach of hundred
worms and tell them to remember by it
what I once was; give me ten years of lodg-
ing without a landlord to call me up for
the rent of it, then, when I am thinned out
to naught but joints and bones, make pearl
jewels of my residue. That's the end of it,
and it I am a fool in this, why I'm as wise
as the philosopher who hath a mousoleum

and who knows no more. Time will deal justice out even in a corpse, and the dainty bed o' the rich deadman hath life in it, as well's the dirty head o' the live beggar.

PRIEST:—Thou speakest vulgarly on what is not profane, Senor. Death is a solemn thing, to gaze on which should make us pause and contemplate. Thou art the crysallis that taketh wings beyond the grave and soareth forever. The vile words of thy tongue in time are stored against thee in vault of eternity.

S. RECKLAW:—I'll grant thee that death is a solemn thing; but thence on we differ. Art thou a chrysalis, thou art a butterfly in larva; for whilst thy body crawls a-belly thy mind soars like the balloon it is. And speaking on this this thing eternity, what is thy compass on this voyage of thy thought. Thou sailest but by card and 'tis a card was made in port. No 'venturer hath returned to say of the land what it is, where lies its shore, what its shallows and its narrows be. To believe but by belief is hard on our credences. I grant again 'tis a solemn thing to die and drift into eternity when we are young. 'Tis as the voyager adown the stream afield sailing to the sea, and there lose the current and pass, nor ever do oar back to happy scenes behind. But when all here is dark and the worm has gnawed the bud of pleasure, when the scene is chill and drear and naught is left to beckon us back, then to go adrift, upon this sea of death were as embarking on some voyage of discovery. We are but men; hope and a dream are what we live on, and if we die not, why do we die?

PRIEST:—Good Senor, thou hast reason in thy principles, which is to say thou hast no religion. Hast thou no faith thou mayst doubt against all authority; but having faith belief is easy. Thou art now nearing the night and theories with thee are as toys of childhood to age. Canst thou believe thou canst repair the past—in that thou takest no chance; but falling to this abyss as thou art, and there being retribution in it; why then 'tis thine to suffer.

S. RECKLAW:—Then thou'rt a gambler in facts. Say you, if I bet against the judgment day, and lose, I pay the forfeit; but betting upon the event and losing I nothing lose. Thy philosophy hath a moral to it.

PRIEST:—I thou art a man that's fated. It is not sad that the body perish; but when a soul is lost, then angels weep.

S. RECKLAW:—No, let the angels weep. That they can weep proves that I could be no angel, for I could not weep, were single tears the price of heaven. Good friend thou hast no conception of hell. Of that I could tell many a tale for I dwelt there these several years. Thy heaven I know naught of. But of this I say: If there is a sea beyond the grave I am bound to its calm waters.

Enter VACQUERO.

VACQUERO:—Master I have come to ask thee home; for all is at wrong ends by the hacienda. Here is thy horse. Jingo, the cook, and Maria are gone together, and the herders are at drunk'n revels.

S. RECKLAW:—At drunken revels let them stay. The world's a drunken revel which begins in night and ends in night. But I will go with thee to seek my daughter for I fear she cannot find the way. Padre farewell.

[Exeunt]

SCENE II—THE GRAVE OF ALICE.

SLADE:—That I have loved that which I have destroyed and have destroyed that which I loved, does balance in the scale of my remorse, but nothing from its sum removes. I loved thee living, and I killed thee with my love; yet though my love was thus enough to slay such beauty in its spring, 'twas but the acorn of an oak of love whose roots now pierce thy grave. And thou art dead? then music's soul is flown. And thou'rt not here, beauty can be no more. Thou wert the light of day and didst the night with thy sweet radiance tincture. When sang the oriole, then 'twas to thee he tuned his fluted throat, for thee the mocking bird did scale

the woodland gamut. Now hushed the wood shall be, the singing rills their tunes shall change to threne, and the wide-arching day who saw thee in thy freshness methinks shall veil his eye in sorrow. And me—there is no time, nor day, nor night for what I was. I am myself no more; but as a shadow cast by the departing form of fate, I mark a space, anon I'll be obliterated and agone. Oh, thou celestial spirit, Alice, hear me—list me say I did to thee a wrong unthinking on the end. If thou canst speak and I canst hear, say not that I'm forgiven; but that thou'rt gone to better scenes. Say thou hast suffered not for what was all my fault, and then I'll close this night of mine in peace. She speaks not and the mocking breeze, whispers some unknown nobody. Not even in madness can I seem to hear reply to my voiced agony.

Enter CHIC.

Ah, what was that, a whisper. Didst whisper? Was it a voice from that unwavering shore whereon thou wandrest? Speak of it again—say what thou art—anything so that it be not silence. Speak, oh speak!

(Chic, from behind, stabs Slade, who dies.)

Enter RECKLAW.

S. RECKLAW:—Sir, it is a soft and lovely night. Hast thou my daughter seen pass by this way? She was as the diamond brilliant and beautiful as the sapphire; her hair was the ocean's amber and her eyes were formed of the essence of glorious stars. Hast thou seen her pass?

CHIC:—Oh, good Senor—dost thou not know me? Hast thou Chic forgotten, master, thy saddle-tree maker, Chic?

S. RECKLAW.—True, I remember thee. Thou wert the king ere I was born. Good king, hast thou my daughter seen?

CHIC.—He's mad, He's mad, and I did love the master, as I love him yet. Maledictions on his soul that caused this to be. But I have my revenge. Master we are avenged.

S. RECKLAW:—Revenge? Say you revenge? Out with that word. 'Tis traced in blood across the night; 'tis writ upon the gate of hell. Say not revenge, which, as the fire that burns the what it feeds on, leaves but ashes. Oh, out with it.

CHIC:—Tis over now. I have his blood. I have him killed. He sleeps, senor, he sleeps.

S. RECKLAW:—What hast thou on thy hand, that's red.

CHIC:—Knife, master, I killed him thus.

S. RECKLAW:—Let me gaze on it.

(Takes the knife.)

This stain upon it; what is this?

CHIC:—His blood it is. Pity but he could bleed on it again.

S. RECKLAW:—It is his blood? Then the precious fluid of my veins I'll mix with his upon its blade. We'll to another night.
(Stabs himself and dies.)

Enter SEVERAL VACQUEROS.

1st V.:—Passed the senor here? He has escaped our vigil and we thought he'd wander to his daughter's grave,

2d V.:—(Discovering the dead) Soft, friends. It seems the master sleeps.

(Laying his hand upon his heart.)

The pump that worked his heart is broke. He's dead.

CHIC:—Si, the master sleeps, and even he said not good night to Chic. But Chic will say to him good night. So, sweet master, good night, buenos noches, adios.

(The scene closes with Chic bending over the dead body of Recklaw, the vacqueros silently standing around.)

THE END.

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